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SCIENCE

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 30, 1910

AMERICAN ASSOCIATION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF SCIENCE
THE MAKING OF A DARWIN¹

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I MAY take my text from a recent remark of Henry Fairfield Osborn to the effect that a Darwin could not be produced in the American university of to-day. This raises a number of questions, some of them unanswerable, but all of them worthy of the attention of scientific men interested in the continuance of a race of investigators.

As a starting point, I may quote Professor Osborn's words in full:

If "the poet is born, not made," the man of science is surely both born and made. Rare as was Darwin's genius, it was not more rare than the wonderful succession of outward events which shaped his life. It was true in 1817, as to-day, that few teachers teach and few educators educate. It is true that those were the dull days of classical and mathematical drill. Yet look at the roster of Cambridge and see the men it produced. From Darwin's regular college work he may have gained but little, yet he was all the while enjoying an exceptional training. Step by step he was made a strong man by a mental guidance which is without parallel, by the precepts and example of his father, for whom he held the greatest reverence, by his reading the poetry of Shakspeare, Wordsworth, Coleridge and Milton, and the scientific prose of Paley, Herschel and Humboldt, by the subtle scholarly influences of old Cambridge, by the scientific inspirations and advice of Henslow, by the masterful inductive influence of the geologist Lyell, and by the great nature panorama of the voyage of the *Beagle*.

The college mates of Darwin saw more truly than he himself what the old university was doing for him. Professor Poulton, of Oxford, believes that the kind of life which so favored Darwin's mind has largely disappeared in English universities, especially under the sharp sys-

¹ Retiring president's address before the American Association for the Advancement of Science, Minneapolis, Minn., December 27, 1910.